ASCS TODAY

By Tom Conrad

CROP ACREAGE REPORTS - With June 30th just around the corner, all farmers in the County that have not reported crop acreages, should be planning to do so just as soon as possible. June 30th is the final day for farmers to report corn, set-aside, fire, flue and sun cured tobacco acreages. Soybean and grain sorghum acreages can be reported up to July 15.

Farmers enrolled in the Set-Aside Program need to report planted acreages in order to remain in the program and as a result to be eligible for program benefits. Benefits that can be derived from the program are deficiency payments, disaster payments and commodity loans.

Fire, flue and sun cured tobacco producers need to report planted acreages in order to be eligible for price support. Particularly important is for those farmers who did not lease out their tobacco or grow it. These farmers need to report zero planted acreage to the ASCS office or their allotment will be reduced to zero the next year.

Farmers that are not involved in the above two categories, but have or will plant a grain or bean crop are asked to report these acreages to the ASCS office so that our records can be kept up to date for future use.

DARK FIRED TOBACCO SITUATION - Earlier in the year the Virginia Dark Fired Tobacco Growers Marketing Association Board of Directors held its spring meeting. The meeting was held for the purpose of reviewing the past marketing season and to try and assess the present situation of dark fired growers.

It was pointed out by President J. A. Hazlegrove that demand for low quality tobacco had fallen off sharply and that pool receipts had been heavy this past season. He stated that pool stocks now totaled almost 2¼ million pounds from the 1977 and 1978 crops. After the redrying and packing is completed 2156 Hogsheads will be on hand, a good majority of which is in the low grades and non descript. In the opinion of some, much of this tobacco would not be disposed of at an early date.

Tom Hall, Association Manager told the group that for the last two years there had been an undetermined amount of tobacco offered by the growers which received no grade and no bid from the buyers. Some of this tobacco was carried away by the growers but by the end of the season quite a bit had accumulated at the warehouses. This tobacco had to be disposed of by giving it to someone to throw on their land and then ASCS employees inspected the warehouses to see that they were free of tobacco.

It was brought to the attention of the Directors that growers of Type 22 and 23 Dark-Fired Types in Kentucky and Tennessee were experiencing lower prices and growing loan stocks of similar tobacco. This could mean less demand for low grade tobacco for the immediate future since there seems to be building, a world wide supply of low grade tobacco even in the foreign growing areas. Malawi, one of the main foreign growing areas of dark-fired tobacco, had a large, poor quality crop this past marketing season. While foreign growing areas do not usually compete on quality they can outsell the United States when it comes to low quality tobacco.

As all fire producers know the United States Department of Agriculture announced a 10% cut in allotments for 1979. The Association opposed this cut but it was necessary because of the loan supply. If quality does not improve, further cuts may become necessary.

Growers can help correct the problem by making every effort to grow quality tobacco in the future. The percentage of low grade tobacco marketed must be decreased. Growers can do this by either priming their tobacco before topping or be leaving the lower stalk leaves in the field at harvest, or by leaving them at home when they get ready to market their tobacco.

Buying interest who have been consulted point out usage of Type 21 tobacco and demand is still steady. Because of poor growing seasons and some growers emphasis on pounds instead of quality, many others have gone unfilled in recent years. If growers would put increased emphasis on growing quality, then averages and gross returns per acre would most certainly go up.

GROWER SUPPORT VITAL TO FLUE-CURED CO-OPERATIVE'S FUTURE - Every tobacco grower is urged to market quality tobacco this year. Consider leaving the "P" and "N" grades in the field.

Flue-cured Tobacco Cooperative Stabilization Corporation, the grower's cooperative marketing association which makes price support loans to growers, currently has about a two-year supply of "P" and "N" grades in storage. Unless these stocks are reduced, losses could occur which would jeopardize the tobacco program. This situation makes 1979 a critical year for Stabilization which makes the cooperation of every grower necessary to help solve the downstalk problem.

During the 1978 marketing season upstalk grades averaged $1.41 per pound. "P" and "N" grades averaged 38 cents less - only $1.03 per pound. Help yourself and the total program by leaving the "P" and "N" grades in the field. Place emphasis on marketing good-bodied, flavorful tobacco which is always in strong demand by both domestic and export buyers.

Following are reasons for leaving downstalk tobacco in the field:

(1) Since 1974, Stabilization has received 234 million pounds of downstalk ("P" and "N") grades. To date less than 25 million pounds of the 234 million pounds has been sold.

(2) Carrying costs on these tobaccos, most of which is interest, amount to $1.5 million monthly. Your Cooperative can't continue to hold these tobaccos for an unreasonable length of item without sustaining losses.

(3) Supply has exceeded demand. Demand for "P" and "N" grades has declines, while production, in fact, has increased since 1974, with the exception of the 1978 crop.

(4) Loan rates have been established at levels above the true market value due to statutory requirements built into price support formula.

(5) Foreign-grown tobacco that could substitute for "P" and "N" grades is available at a much lower price.

USDA CALLS FOR COMMENTS ON 1980 WHEAT, BARLEY, OATS PROGRAM PROPOSALS - Secretary of Agriculture Bob Bergland has asked to public to comment by August 5 on proposals for the 1980 wheat program.

He also asked for comment on whether barley and oats should be included in the 1980 feed grain program and whether program decisions on barley and oats should be announced at the same time as for wheat.

Bergland proposes to make the following determinations: The amount of the national program acreages; The reduction from the previous year's harvested acreage required to guarantee established (target) price protection on the total 1980 planted acreage; Whether there should be a set-aside requirement and, if so, the extent of the set-aside; Whether there should be a land diversion program and, if so, the extent of such diversion and the level of payment; The loan and purchase levels of 1980 crops of wheat, barley, oats and rye; Whether the special wheat acreage grazing and hay program should be implemented; The established (target) prices for wheat, barley and oats; and Other related provisions such as: Commodity Credit Corporation minimum resale price, commodity eligibility, storage requirements, incentives and discounts and other provisions as may be necessary to carry out the program.

Most of these determinations for wheat are required to be made by the secretary on or before August 15. Normally a decision on the inclusion of barley and oats in the feed grain program is made at the same time the corn and sorghum program decision is made, prior to November 15. As some barley is planted in the fall and does compete with wheat for the same acreage, the secretary is considering whether an announcement of the 1980 barley and oats program provisions along with the 1980 wheat program announcement is appropriate.

The proposal is to appear in the Federal Register June 6.

Before reaching his decision, the secretary will consider any recommendation and views regarding these items.

To be assured of consideration all written comments must be received on or before August 5. Comments should be sent to the director, production adjustment division, ASCS, USDA, room 3630-S, P. O. Box 2415, Washington, D. C. 20013.

All comments will be available for public inspection at the office of the director during regular business hours.

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Corn ears and stalks are attacked by the same fungus that attacks small grains; therefore, the fungus is carried over from growing season to growing season when corn or small grain stubble is left on the soil surface. The current season's crop may be infected by wind borne spores from such residues. The disease is spread during the season from both residue and newly infected plants. Crop rotation and plow down of crop residues may aid in control of this disease. Many scab on wheat is likely to occur when wheat follows corn without plowing or is planted next to a continuous no-till field of corn.

There are no chemical controls which will control the disease.

If seed wheat is saved from a field which had even a low degree of scab infection, it should be thoroughly cleaned and treated before planting. Seed treatment will prevent the seedling blight caused by the scab fungus; however, it will not control head blight.

* * *

This year 36% of the Virginia Flue Cured Tobacco crop is planted to Coker 319 and in second place is McNair 944. The remaining 34% of the crop is divided among ten varieties.

Last year 26% of the Virginia Bright Leaf was cured in bulk barns, but 87% was hand harvested.

* * *

Dust bags offer the best choice for controlling face flies and horn flies. It is a must that dust bags be suspended low (18 to 22 inches from the ground) for face fly control. The swinging action provided by the best possible use of the ropes is also very important. Last, but not least, there is not a great deal of difference between the different dusts or the bags that are available. However, adequate face fly control requires a lot of dust. The waterproof bag now on the market does not put out enough dust to give good control of face flies.

It is highly desirable that a few holes be made in the bag itself with a knife to allow more dust to sift from the bag. This will aid in the control of face flies.

I must emphasize the importance of forced use of dust bags or back rubbers. Beef cattle or non-lactating dairy animals may be force treated by suspending dust bags in the entrances to water or mineral or both. For this reason, it is all important to consider a pen with a narrow entrance to enclose mineral stations. This provides a good spot for forced use of dust bags. Dairymen should consider suspending dust bags over exits from milking parlors. Every situation is different; you must find a situation that will allow you to maximize use of dust bags if flies are to be controlled.

The Appomattox County Farm Bureau has purchased a grain moisture tester for farmers use.

If you need to check your grain, bring 1 quart to this office for testing.

Eating Well

by Mrs. Barbara L. Morlang, R.D., Ph.D., State Nutrition Consultant
Va. Dept. of Health

WARNING SIGNS OF HEART ATTACK

A heart attack occurs when the blood supply to a portion of the heart muscle is abruptly cut off. Without blood - and the oxygen it contains - the heart cannot function.

Contrary to what many people believe, most heart attacks are not fatal. Most victims recover and return to normal lives. However, the minutes that elapse between the on set of the heart attack and its definitive treatment to a large degree determines life or death.

It is for this reason that is is important to be able to recognize the warning signs of a heart attack. What are some of the warning signs? They can vary, but the usual warnings of a heart attack include a prolonged, oppressive, or unusual pain in the center of the chest behind the breastbone. The pain may spread outward to the shoulder, the arm, the neck, or the jaw. Sweating will often accompany the pain. Nausea, vomiting, shortness of breath may also occur.

Even though the heart may be strong, and the heart attack may be a relatively minor one, the first hour after the heart attack is the time when the complications are the greatest. This is due to the fact that most of the deaths in the early stages of heart attack are caused not by damage to the heart muscle itself, but by an irregular rhythm of the heartbeat. Doctors call this irregular beat, ventricular fibrillation. Immediate treatment of ventricular fibrillation, by drugs or by electronic stimulation, can restore the normal beat and prevent heart damage.

The faster treatment is started after a heart attack, the better the chance of saving the heart attack victim. Lives are saved daily by prompt treatment of heart attacks in hospital Coronary Care units. But unfortunately more than half of the deaths occur before the patients reach the hospital.

If you experience the warning signs of a heart attack - what should you do? First, call a doctor at once. Describe your symptoms fully and then follow his advice. If for any reason you cannot reach a doctor, then you should go to the emergency room of the nearest hospital the quickest and least strenuous way possible. Have someone drive you, or take a taxi cab. Remember that every minute counts. Thousands die of heart attacks who would not have had to die if only they had received immediate care.

Because cardiovascular diseases are responsible for 54% of all deaths in the United States, everyone should heed the five ways to reduce the risk of heart attack: 1. Eliminate cigarette smoking; 2. Eat foods low in animal fat and cholesterol; 3. Keep weight normal; 4. Exercise regularly; 5. Have a regular physical check-up. These do not guarantee that you will not get a coronary, but they will help to prevent it.

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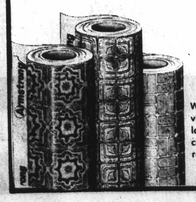

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